

22st October 2015

Queensland Parliament
Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee

Re: Submission for Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015 - to provide for recording of demerit points against the traffic history of a person who provides a taxi service without a taxi service licence or a peak demand taxi permit.

Dear Committee Members,

Please find below this submission for consideration by the committee.

Uber and other illegal taxi service operators continue to operate outside the law, undermining current legislation and destroying the investment of law abiding operators and licence holders. Current penalties are not sufficient to deter illegal taxi service operations and it is imperative that this Bill is passed as one of many measures to ensure all taxi service providers are operating legally and fairly.

Government needs to be giving a clear message to multinational companies, like Uber, to operate within the rules. I have no problem with Uber operating in this state as long as they operate within the same legislative requirement as the taxi industry. Let us not be confused by the term 'ride share' as the Uber service is far from a ride share service. It is a public passenger transport service, a taxi service, conveniently masquerading as a ride share service.

Further measures required include;

1. An increase in the current fines given by DTMR enforcement officers to a more substantial amount to deter unlawful operators.
2. Implementing the suspension fines, followed by deregistration and un-insurance of the vehicle as per NSW Roads and Maritime Services
3. Impound the vehicle used by Uber drivers for at least 3 months
4. REMOVING THE UBER APP – would certainly sever the operations of this illegal company, as suggested by the Member for Keppel at the committee briefing on the 14th of October
5. Enhance powers of DTMR enforcement officers
6. Change acts, legislation, policy, procedure etc if necessary for QLD police officers to act now and enforce the law

The Queensland Taxi Industry incorporates security cameras, eftpos facilities, GPS tracking and more. It keeps passengers safe and is regulated to ensure fares are fair and reasonable at all times according to government requirements.

It is not reasonable for a going concern like Uber to come into our country and state and flaunt our laws, after all you cannot operate as a builder, or sell alcohol without a licence and operating a taxi service is no different. I urge the committee to approve this Bill which is a necessary step in keeping Queenslanders safe on our roads and ensuring the continuing viability of thousands of small business in the law abiding, tax contributing taxi industry.

Regards,

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